THE EMERSON SOCIETY QUARTERLY

PUBLISHED FOUR TIMES A YEAR BY THE EMERSON SOCIETY, BOX 1080
HARTFORD 1, CONNECTICUT, AND EDITED FOR THE SOCIETY BY
KENNETH WALTER CAMERON. ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP $4.00

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
LIBRARY
APR 17 1961
CHICAGO

NUMBER SEVENTEEN——FOURTH QUARTER——1959

THOREAU'S TRANSLATION OF *THE SEVEN AGAINST THEBES* (1843)

Edited by

LEO MAX KAISER

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY

THE EMERSON SOCIETY

DRAWER 1080 HARTFORD 1

1960

INTRODUCTION

In May, 1843, Thoreau left the house of Ralph Waldo Emerson, where he had been residing, to live as a tutor in the home of William Emerson on Staten Island. Ill and lonely though he was, he carried on his work in Greek, chiefly a translation of The Seven Against Thebes.[1] He had begun his reading in Aeschylus in November, 1839, esteeming the works of that dramatist and those of Homer and Vergil "as beautiful as the morning itself." He proceeded almost immediately to make a translation of the Prometheus (published three years later in The Dial), and in January, 1840, was reading The Seven Against Thebes.[2] At this time, he was interested in the figure of the "brave man," finding, no doubt, in Aeschylus' play about civil strife the same appeal discovered in the Prometheus—that of the indomitable hero—for, indeed, the Theban play is significant among the works of the playwright and in all extant Greek drama in offering us the earliest example of the "tragic hero."

Thoreau worked at this second translation only intermittently, writing to Emerson on February 15, 1843: "The translation of the Aeschylus I should like very much to continue anon, if it should be worth the while." The appearance of the Prometheus in The Dial, doubtless, stimulated him to return to his task. In May, he went to Staten Island, where, a few months later, he finished it, again writing Emerson (August 7, 1843): "I have made a very rude translation of The Seven Against Thebes...." It has been preserved in the Huntington Library in HM 13193 and is published here for the first time.[3]

Like his rendering of the Prometheus[4] it is highly literal, adhering closely to the word-order of the Greek. His estimate of the work as "very rude" is accurate enough, yet allows the reader a better appreciation of the craggy style of Aeschylus than many a polished version. Though he produces essentially a "slavish interlinear," at times, when close translation is easily achievable, he handles his text with freedom. He seems to have made these studies of the Classics because he found them intellectual challenges and disciplines. Perhaps, too, he wished to keep his Greek vocabulary alive and growing. In noting his occasional carelessness one ought to remember that the text in hand is not a final draft intended for the printer.[5] In Walden, he asserted that when one translates he must "laboriously seek the meaning of each word and line" and that "the modern cheap and fertile press, with all its translations, has done little to bring us nearer to the heroic writers of antiquity." How laboriously he worked at his translations and reworked them has been pointed out elsewhere,[6] but in the notes to this edition one may witness impressive evidence.

As in his translation of the Prometheus, so here the distinctive Greek text-readings are reflected in his phrasings, but they are too few to enable me to determine what edition he used. Since they do not show acquaintance with the textual conjectures of modern scholars like Blomfield, Schütz, Bothe, and Dindorf,[7] I am persuaded that the printed page before him was of the eighteenth century or earlier.

No line numbers having been employed in Thoreau's manuscript, I have added those of H. Weir Smyth's edition in the Loeb Classical Library. Thoreau's capitalization of initial letters is retained. His assignment of speaking characters differs from that of modern texts at lines 871-957. Since the manuscript is not thoroughly punctuated, I have supplied the conventional marks in the interests of clarity. A few spelling forms like foretel and behove I have modified, making them conform to Thoreau's predominant usage.

I wish to thank the Huntington Library, of San Marino, California, for generous permission to publish this translation; Professor Ethel Seybold, of Illinois College, for her ready response to several inquiries; Professor Walter Harding, of State University Teachers College, Geneseo, New York, for suggestions and criticisms; and the Emerson Society for its interest in all that concerns Henry David Thoreau.

— LEO M. KAISER

Loyola University, Chicago.

---

1 For a discussion of Thoreau's education, interest and reading in the classics, see Ethel Seybold, Thoreau: The Quest and the Classics, New Haven, 1951.

2 F. B. Sanborn's remark that Thoreau read the play in college seems without support. Cf. Sanborn's The Life of Henry David Thoreau, Boston, 1917, p. 245, note 1, with Seybold, op. cit., p. 35, note 9.

3 Prof. Walter Harding suggests that perhaps a later or final draft of Thoreau's translation of The Seven Against Thebes may survive in a collection of uncatalogued papers--for example, in those of the Ralph Waldo Emerson Memorial Association. He cites the following passage in F. B. Sanborn, The Life of Henry D. Thoreau, Boston, 1910, p. viii: "In March, 1878, after hearing Emerson read a few unpublished notes on Thoreau, made years before, I called on him one evening, and thus entered the event in my journals: 'I was shown several of Thoreau's early papers; one a commentary on Emerson's "Sphinx," and another from his own translation of "The Seven against Thebes," written at William Emerson's house on Staten Island in 1843.'" Sanborn refers, possibly, to only a few specimen pages--not to a complete manuscript. Prof. Ralph L. Rusk is almost certain that no final draft survives among the Emerson papers in the Houghton Library.

4 See Seybold, op. cit., p. 18, and Leo M. Kaiser, "Remarks on Thoreau's Translation of the Prometheus," Classical Weekly, XLVI (1953), pp. 69-70.

5 Mistranslations and renderings which point to a distinctive Greek text are indicated in succeeding footnotes. Along with "Pallas" and "Zeus" we find inconsistencies like "Neptune" instead of "Poseidon," "Kadmus" and "Cadmus," "Kapaneus" and "Capaneus," "Ongca" and "Onca." At one point (lines 936-939) four lines were not translated.

6 See Seybold, op. cit., p. 19.

7 See Kaiser, loc. cit., p. 69, note 3.

The Seven Against Thebes.

Persons of the Drama
Eteocles,
Messenger [illegible] Scout.
Chorus of Virgins,
Jocasta
Antigone
Herald

[First page of Thoreau's manuscript]

Et. Citizens of Cadmus; it behooves that he who holds
the helm of state, awake to the times
& the city steer, not slowing sail in storm.
For just as kind to me the gods are favorable;
So if, on the other hand, blind impostors hope,
The wind is Eteocles with my wounded Thebes
O, my citizens, with [illegible] prelude called
So, I can say to you from which may see.
Let it behoove you now, both him who wants wept
The keeping of [illegible] youth, and the [illegible]
Holding nurse, whatever age [illegible] strength of body,
And I [illegible] nature [illegible] as it is fit,
So to help the city, & the altars of the country
Gods, [illegible] children yours, & [illegible] Earth, [illegible]
This indeed by keeping you with friendly plain,
Respecting all the issues of childhood,
Can nourished by [illegible] childbearing adults,

AESCHYLUS

THE SEVEN AGAINST THEBES

translated by

HENRY DAVID THOREAU

Persons of the Drama[8]

Eteocles — Ismene
a Messenger,[9] Scout — Antigone
Chorus of Virgins — Herald

ETEOCLES

Citizens of Cadmus, it behooves that he should speak whate'er[10] the times require,
Whoever has in charge the commonwealth, managing[11] the helm
In the city's stern, not closing his (eye)[12] lids in sleep.
For if we should do well, the gods are thanked[13] for it;
But if, on the other hand—which be not so—misfortune happen,
Then may be Eteocles would be blamed[14] throughout the city
By the citizens with lengthy preludes
And lamentations—from which may Zeus called[15] the Defender
Indeed defend[16] the city of the Cadmeans.
But it behooves you now, both him who wants as yet
The perfect bloom of youth and who exceeds[17] in time,
Adding much vigorous strength of body,[18]
And of whatever age,[19] so as is fit,
To aid[20] the city and the altars of his country's
Gods so that their honors may ne'er[21] be effaced;
And his children, too, and Mother Earth, his dearest nurse,
Who indeed your[22] creeping youth with friendly plain,
Supporting all the miseries of your childhood,
Has nourished up, shield-bearing colonists
And faithful, that you might be against this need.
And even to this day Heaven is well inclined;
For to us, besieged now this long while,
War for the most part has proceeded well by favor of the gods.
But now, as the soothsayer says, herdsman of birds,
Considering in his ears and understanding, apart from fire,
Oracular omens with unfailing art—
This one[23] master of such oracles—
Says (that)[24] Achaia leads on by night and intends[25]
Against the city the greatest assault of all.
Now to the ramparts[26] and the bulwark gates
Hasten ye all, hurry with all your armor,
Crowd to the breastworks and on the platforms
Of the towers stand, and at the passages of the gates
Abiding be of good courage, nor fear much

The crowd of the besiegers: Heaven does well for us.
And I have sent out spys and watches to observe
The army, who will not loiter by the way, I trust;[27]
And hearing from them by no means can I be taken by treachery.

SCOUT

Eteocles, most excellent king of the Cadmeans,
I come bearing sure tidings from the host.
For I myself am spy[28] of the affairs.
Seven men forsooth, impetuous captains,
Slaughtering a bull into a black-bound shield,
And touching with their hands the bullock's blood,
By Ares, Enyo, and blood-loving Phobos
Have taken oath either destroying this town
To lay waste the city of the Cadmeans,
Or dying moisten this land with their blood.
And memorials of themselves for their parents at home
With their hands they piled upon the chariot of Adrastus,
shedding
A tear, but there was no sigh escaped their lips.
For an iron spirit burning with bravery
Breathed in them, as lions beholding battle.
And these things I inform you are not delayed by sloth,
But I left them drawing lots, how each of them by lot
Would lead a band against the gates.
Therefore the best men chosen of the city
Place[29] quickly at the passages of the gates;
For now at hand completely armed the host[30] of Argives
Approaches, raises the dust, and the plains the white foam
Stains in drops from the horses' breasts.
But do you like a skillful helmsman of a ship
Fortify the city before the blasts of war burst on it,
For roars the savage[31] wave of an army.
And seize the season of these things as quick as possible,
And I for the rest a faithful daywatching
Eye will have, and with clearness of words
Knowing the things without the gates thou wilt be uninjured.

ETEOCLES

O Zeus and Gaea and Gods who have the city as your charge,
And powerful Curse, my father's fury,
Do not eradicate my city from the stern—
Utterly destroyed, captured by the enemy, speaking
The tongue of Hellas—and domestic houses.
But may the free land and the city of Cadmus
Never support the yoke of slavery!
Be ye an aid, for I trust I speak[32] a common interest:
For a city faring well honors the divinities.

CHORUS

I lament fearful great woes:
The army has been let loose, leaving the camp;
Flows numerous this host, forerunning on horseback.
In air a dust persuades me appearing
Without speech, a clear, true messenger. [horses
And a sound routing from my couch caused by the trampling of
Approaches, flies,
And roars like
An irresistible water resounding among the mountains.
Alas, alas, alas, alas! Gods and Goddesses,
Avert the rushing evil!
Resounds[33] above the walls,
The white-shielded army rushes
Ready, hastening against the city.

Who then will deliver,
Who then will succour
Of Gods or Goddesses?
Shall I then fall down
Before the images of the divinities?[34]
O blessed well-seated,
It is high time to draw near the images.
Why do we delay deeply moaning?
Hear ye or hear ye not the clashing of shields?
Shall we have robes and garlands
Ever, if not now, for prayer?
I perceive a noise,[35] a rattling not of one spear.
What wilt thou do? Wilt thou betray,
Aboriginal Ares,
Thy own land?
O golden-helmed divinity, regard, regard the city
If ever you esteemed it dear!
Gods, protectors of this region,
Come, come all!
Behold of virgins
A suppliant band
On account of bondage.
For a wave of men
With bearded crests,
Excited by the blasts
Of war, roars.
But, O Zeus father, entirely
Ward off capture by our foes.
For the Argives surround
The city of Cadmus, and fear of hostile arms;
And the bridles fastened to the horses' jaws
Rattle slaughter.
And seven brave and distinguished men of their host
With spear-shaking shields stand 'gainst
The seven gates, having by lot drawn them.
And thou, O Zeus-born
War-loving head,[36]
Be a defender of the city,
Pallas![37] And thou horseman,
Sea-ruling king
Neptune, with thy fish-striking
Weapon give release!
From fears a release!
And thou Ares, alas, alas!
Guard the city of Cadmus
Bearing his name,
And visibly take care of it!
And Cypris, who art original mother
Of our race, defend! From thy blood
We sprang. With prayers
Addressed to the gods, entreating
We draw near to thee. And thou
Lycian king, be wolf-like
To the hostile army
Like a battle-cry of groans! And thou,
O virgin descended from Latona,
Prepare well thy bow. Alas, alas, alas, alas,
I hear a din of chariots round the city,
O reverend Juno!
The boxes of the heavily laden axles resound,
Dear Artemis! Alas, alas, alas, alas!

The spear-vexed atmosphere is mad.
What does my city suffer? What will become of it?
To what end does heaven lead us? Alas, alas, alas, alas!
And stones come to the pointed battlements.
O dear Apollo,
A clashing in the gates of brass-bound shields,
And from Zeus
A war-finishing holy end in fight!
And thou, blessed queen
Ongca, before the city
Defend the seven-gated seat!
O ye almighty Gods
And Goddesses of perfect power,
Guardians of this land,
Betray not the city exposed to the spear,
To a host speaking a strange tongue!
Hear our virgins!
Hear our wholly-just
And suppliant prayers!
O dear divinities,
With power to deliver surrounding the city,
Show yourselves friendly to the city!
Care for the sacred gifts of the people
And caring help!
And be mindful to me
Of the sacrifice-loving orgies
Of the city!

ETEOCLES I ask you, race not to be borne,
Are these things best and bringing safety to the city
And courage to this besieged army,
Falling down before the images of the city-guarding gods,
To sigh[38] and shriek, objects of hatred to the wise?
Neither in ills nor in sweet prosperity
Would I be a dweller with the race of woman.
For prevailing, her insolence[39] is not to be borne;
And fearing, to house and city the more evil.
And now producing in the citizens these flights,
Running hither and thither, ye spread spiritless fear, [sist,
And the affairs of those without the gates as well as ye can as-
And we by ourselves within are ruined.[40]
Such things dwelling with a woman thou[41] wouldst have.
And if any one shall not obey my authority,
Man or woman or whatever is between them,
A ruinous decree shall be pronounced against them, [ple.
And by no means may he escape death by being stoned by the peo-
For it concerns a man! Let not a woman consider
Things without, but being within do no harm!
Dost thou hear, or dost thou not hear, or do I speak to a deaf person?

CHORUS O dear offspring of Oedipus, I feared, hearing
The tumult of rattling chariots
And when the hollow naves resounded and
The sleepless rudders in the mouths of the horses,
The bridles wrought by fire.

ETEOCLES What then? Does the sailor forsooth flying to the prow
From the stern find means of safety,
His vessel laboring against[42] a wave of the sea?

CHORUS But to the ancient statues of the gods

Hastening I came, trusting to the gods, when [falling.
There was the roaring at the gates of a destructive snowstorm
Then indeed through fear I offered up prayers to the gods
That they might hold their strength over the city.

ETEOCLES Pray that our towers ward off the hostile spear!

CHORUS Will this not be a favor of the gods?

ETEOCLES But then as for the gods
There is a saying that they desert a captured city.

CHORUS Never in my life may this general assembly of the gods
Desert us, nor may I see
This city taken by storm, and an army
Setting to it hostile fire!

ETEOCLES Do not calling on the gods consult ill!
For Obedience is the mother of success,
The wife of the savior. Such is the saying.

CHORUS There is to the gods a power superior,
And often in evils the remediless cloud
Of severe woe hung o'er
Our eyes it may clear away.

[fice

ETEOCLES These things are the duty of men: the slaughter and the sacri-
To perform to the gods, the enemy endeavoring;
But thine on the other hand to be silent and remain within the house.

CHORUS Through the gods we possess our city unsubdued
And our tower keeps off the host of enemies.
What wrath hates these things?

[gods.

ETEOCLES By no means am I unwilling that you should honor the race of the
But that you may not make the citizens faint-hearted,
Be calm[43] nor (greatly)[44] fear.

CHORUS Hearing a strange noise, with
Trembling fear to this acropolis,
Honorable seat, I came.

ETEOCLES Do not now, if ye hear of dead or
Wounded, burst straightway into lamentations.
For Ares feeds upon this blood of men.

CHORUS Surely I hear the snorting of horses.

ETEOCLES Hearing, hear not now too plainly.

CHORUS The city resounds from the ground as if surrounded.

ETEOCLES But it is enough that I consult for these things.

CHORUS I fear, for this clashing in the gates increases.

ETEOCLES Will you not be silent? Say none of these things in the city!

CHORUS O assembly, do not betray our towers!

ETEOCLES Destruction! Will you not hear these things in silence?

Et. Destructor! will you not learn these things a slave
Ch. Citizen gods - let me not obtain slavery.
Et. O happy would be a slave both me and the city.
Ch. O all-powerful Zeus, turn thy weapon against the enemy
Et. O Zeus of women what a race you have restored to us.
Ch. Wretched, as men, when their city is taken.
Et. Dost thou lament again, touching again the statues?
Ch. For want of many fear possesses my tongue.
Et. We are being unstable from a slight cause
Ch. Why it is not easy quickly I shall know it.
Et. Be silent, o wretched one, frighten not thy friends.
Ch. I will be silent; but then not I'll suffer what
Et. Go and instead of these evils prefer [illegible] fated.
Ch. Behind these, being for you the statues,
Pray the gods the our allies and better things;
Hearing my wishes, then do thou [Lines 252-280]
For thy command sing the sacred and chief evening paean,
The great Hellenic custom of the Priestes' chant.
Courage of thy friends, banishing the fear of the enemy
And of the guardian deities of this region,
Guarding the plain and overseeing the market place,
At Dirce's fountains, now to a respite of mourning,
Proceeding well, and the city having been saved,
Having with blood of sheep the hearths of the gods,
And having undone to the gods, I have come
To place trophies, these garments of the enemy
Which taken by the spear from our foes, in their sacred houses.
Such things now with lamentations of the gods

CHORUS Citizen Gods, let me not obtain slavery!

ETEOCLES Thyself wouldst enslave both me and thee and the city.

CHORUS O all-powerful Zeus, turn thy weapons 'gainst the enemy!

ETEOCLES O Zeus, of women what a race you have bestowed!

CHORUS Wretched as men when their city is taken!

ETEOCLES Dost thou lament again, touching again the statues?

CHORUS For want of energy fear possesses my tongue.

ETEOCLES Me asking wouldst thou grant a slight thing?[45]

CHORUS Say it at once and quickly I shall know it.

ETEOCLES Be silent, o wretched one! Frighten not thy friends!

CHORUS I will be silent. With the rest I'll suffer what is fated.

ETEOCLES This word instead of those I will prefer of yours.
And beside these, being far from the statues,
Pray the gods to be our allies unto better things!
Hearing my wishes then do thou
For thy lament sing the sacred and enlivening paean,
The Hellenic custom of the Priestess' shout,
Courage to thy friends, banishing the fear of the enemy.
And I to the guardian deities of this region
Guarding the plain and overseeing the market place,
And to Dirce's fountains—nor do I refuse Ismenus—
Succeeding well, and the city having been saved,
Staining with blood of sheep the hearths of the gods
And slaying bullocks to the gods, I here vow
To place trophies, the garments of the enemy,
Spoils taken by the spear from our foes, in their sacred houses.
Such things vow not with lamentations to the gods
Nor in vain and rude sighs.
For not at all the more may'st thou escape what's fated.
But I going will arrange six men,
Myself the seventh, answering to the enemy in dreadful wise,
At the entrances of the seven gates
Before fleet messages and swift-running
Words arrive and I am set on fire by necessity.

CHORUS It concerns! My mind will not rest!
But near my heart cares
Kindle fear
Of the host around the walls,
As some all-trembling dove
Sleepless upon her nest
Fears for her young
The serpent.
For some against the towers
With all their host, with all their crowd,
March. What may become of us?
Others against the uncertain
Citizens hurl
The rough stone.
By every means, o Zeus-born

[Lines 307-334]

With water of Styx
Flattest of drinks,
to many an earth-shaking
Neptune scarce,
With children of Gethys.'
Wherefore, I city-guarding
Gods, sending among
From without the towers, Mars-
destroying calamity, casting and carrying away
the arms, take
Glory; and to the citizens leadership
supplications of the citizens
Now ye stand defenders of the city-
and well seated.
For suitable this Egyptian city
To send before to crime and blade, prey of the sea-
She dare I fatally ashes,
Prey' Laid waste disgracefully
By an Achaean man, with the help of the heaven.
Of the captured female head,
Alas! alas! alas!' both young and old,
Like horses of 'chatters,
Their garments rent.
And dust echoes the emptied city,
The confusedly murmuring head has' destroyed;
Indeed I fear heavy calamities.
As if it were not for him who came hastily passed the
That they must ye the watchful way from the homes
upon prohibitions

Gods, city and army
Of Kadmus' race protect!
What plains of earth will ye receive in exchange
More excellent than this, yielding to the army
The deep-soiled ground
And the water of Dirce
Fattest of drinks
As many as earth-shaking
Neptune sends[46]
And the children of Tethys?
Therefore, o city-guarding
Gods, sending among
Those without the towers Man-
Destroying Calamity, causing to cast away
The arms, take
Glory, and to the loud-wailing
Supplications of the citizens
May ye stand defenders of the city
And well-seated!
For pitiable this Ogygian city
To send before its time to Hades, prey of the spear,
The slave of filthy ashes,
Being laid waste disgracefully
By an Achaean man with the help of heaven,
And the captured females lead,
Alas, alas, alas, both young and old
Like horses by halters,
Their garments rent.
And echoes the emptied city,
The confusedly murmuring herd being destroyed.
Indeed I fear heavy calamities, [childhood
And it is to be wept for them who have hardly passed the age of
That they must go the hateful way from their homes
With the prospect of being violated before ripe.
What? For I declare that he dead
Does better than these!
For when a city is subdued,
Alas, alas, alas, many unfortunate things are done!
One attacks another,
Murders, and sets fire to things.
With smoke all the city is blackened,
And furious Ares inspires
Destroying the people, defiling piety.
And tumults through the city,
And against the city a hedge of turrets.
And man by man is killed with the spear,
And the bloody bleatings
Of those at the breast
New-born resound,
And kindred plunder of those running hither and thither.
He carrying fights with him carrying,
And the empty calls to him empty,
Wishing to have a companion
Nor left with less nor equal.
What can words compare to these things?
And fruit from various soils
Falling on the ground makes it groan, lighting upon it.
And sad the eye of the bridegrooms,
And many a gift of earth,
Indiscriminately mingled, with trifling
Impetuosity is borne along.

And the young members of the commonwealth newly afflicted,
Wretched,[47] a man obtaining
Their captured bed as
A superior enemy.
Hope is that a nightly end may come,
Defender from very grievous sufferings.

SEMICHORUS The watch, as it seems to me, brings
Some new account to us, my friends, of the host,
With zeal impelling the carrying axletrees of his feet.

SEMICHORUS Indeed the king himself, offspring of Oedipus,
Comes to learn the messenger's report of new arrangements,
But his zeal does not equal the foot of this one.

SCOUT I would tell, well knowing, the affairs of our opponents,
How in the gates each one drew his lot.
Tydeus forsooth now thunders at the Proetian
Gate, for the soothsayer does not permit to pass
The ford of Ismenus, for the victims are not good.
But Tydeus, furious and earnestly desiring battle
As a dragon raging with noonday hissings, shouts
And assaults with reproach the prophet, wise Oecleides,
That he shakes through want of spirit at fate and battle.
Shouting such things he shakes his three shady
Crests, the hair of his helm, and under his shield
The brazen-driven bosses resound fear.
And he has this proud design upon his shield:
A heaven burning with stars wrought,
And a bright full moon in the midst of the shield,
Oldest of stars, eye of night, is distinguished.[48]
Such, furious with his over-boasting shields,
He shouts along the river's banks, desirous of battle
As a horse waits panting upon the bits,
Who waiting the sound of the trumpet, rushes in anticipation.
Whom will you range against him? Who at the gate of Proetus,
The bars being loosed, to stand before them[49] a sufficient
surety?

ETEOCLES I should not tremble at any ornament for man,
Nor are symbols wounding,
And crest and boss do not wound without spear.
And this night which you describe to be
Upon a shield glittering with the stars of heaven
Perhaps may be prophet the thought[50] to someone.
For if night should come[51] over the eyes of him dead,[52]
Him bearing this over-boastful symbol,
It would be rightly and justly described,
And himself against himself will insolently foretell injury.
But to Tydeus the prudent son of Astacus
Him will I oppose to stand before the gates,
Both well-born and honoring the throne
Of modesty and hating haughty words. [coward.
For he is not a doer of base deeds and does not love to be a
From Spartan men whom Ares spared
His root proceeded, and he is wholly of this region:
Melanippus. His work in dice Ares decides,
And kindred Justice surely sends him to the field
To ward off from the mother who bore him the spear of the enemy.

CHORUS Him who now contends for me may the gods
Give to succeed, since justly he rushes

To fight before the city. But I tremble
The blood-bringing fates to behold
On account of my friends destroyed.

SCOUT

To him indeed thus to succeed may the gods give!
But Kapaneus has drawn the Electraean gate—
A giant he another, than the before-named [solves.
Greater, and his boast not according to man in conceived re-
And he threatens terrible things to the towers, which may not fate fulfill![53]
For heaven willing he will utterly lay waste the city,
And not willing he says, nor the wrath of Zeus
Crashing upon the plain shall hold him off.
Lightenings and thunderbolts
He likens to noon-day heats,
And he has an emblem,[54] a naked man bearing fire,
And there burns a torch in his hands prepared,[55]
And in golden letters he says, 'I will burn the city.'
To such a man send who will withstand him,
Who a boasting man not trembling will await.

ETEOCLES

And by this advantage another advantage is produced.
Of vain resolves indeed the true tongue
Is accuser to men.
But Capaneus threatens, prepared to execute,
Dishonoring the Gods. And exercising his mouth
With vain joy, being mortal, against heaven
He sends joyful out waving words to Zeus.
But I trust the fire-bearing bolt will come to him
With vengeance,[56] made nothing like
The midday heats of the sun.
But a man against him, even if he is prompt with his tongue very,
A burning resolution has been stationed, Polyphontes' force,
A sufficient protection by the good will of Artemis
Standing before him with[57] the other gods.
Mention another having obtained another gate.

CHORUS

May he perish who boasts great things against the city,
And may a thunderbolt restrain him
Before he leaps against my house and utterly
Lays waste the colts' seats[58]
Ever with keen-cutting spear.

SCOUT

[gates
And him next having obtained by lot (to stand)[59] against the
I will tell, for to Eteocles third the third lot
Leaped from the high helm of fair brass
Against the gate of Neis to advance[60] his band.
And he whirls his horse in head-gear[61] storming,[62]
Wishing to fall against the gates.
And their bridles rattle in a barbarous manner,
With nostril-boasting[63] breath filled.
And his shield has been devised[64] not in a trivial manner,
But an armed man marches to the ascents of the ladder
Against the enemy's tower, wishing to destroy it utterly.
And this one shouts in syllables of letters
That not even would Ares thrust him out from the towers.
And against this man send the sufficient surety
To keep off from this city the yoke of slavery.

ETEOCLES

This[65] one would I now send and with fortune against him,
And indeed he has been sent having his boast in his hands—

Megareus of the seed of Kreon, of the race of the Spartans,
Who not at all fearing the loud sound of the furious[66] snorting
Of the horses will go from the gate.
But either dying he will fully pay to the earth the cost of his support,
Or having taken the two men and the city
On the shield, with spoils will ornament[67] his father's house.
Boast against another, nor envy me words.

CHORUS

I pray indeed that it may fare well with this one,
O champion of my house, and ill with them!
And as they go boastfully against the city
With furious mind, thus Zeus the dispenser of justice
May behold them angry!

SCOUT

Fourth another, having the neighboring gate
Of Onca Athene, with a shout stands by—
The form of Hippomedon and great figure.
And the large halo—I mean the circle of his shield—
I shuddered as he whirled it. Not otherwise will I say.
He who wrought the device was indeed not any mean person,
Who bestowed this work upon the shield:
Typhon casting out through (his)[68] fire-breathing mouth
Dark smoke, varying[69] brother of fire;
And the surrounding space of the hollow-bellied circle
With folds of serpents touches the ground.
And he raises the cry of battle, and inspired by Ares
Raves violently, as Thyas, looking fear.
Such a man's endeavor is well to ⟨be⟩[70] guarded against,
For fear already swaggers at the gates.

ETEOCLES

First Onca Pallas, who is near the city,
Near to the gates, hating the insolence of the man,
Will restrain him from her young as a furious serpent.[71]
And Hyperbius, illustrious son[72] of Oenops,
A man against this man has been chosen, wishing
To seek out fate in trial[73] of fortune,[74]
Nor in form nor spirit nor the holding of his arms
To be blamed, but Hermes rightly[75] conferred on him,
For hostile this man shall withstand man.
And it is to be contended by hostile gods upon
Their shields; for the one has fire-breathing Typhon,
But to Hyperbius Zeus the father upon his shield
Sits firm, in his hand burning his bolt,
And not yet anyone saw Zeus ever conquered.
Such then the friendship of the divinities!
We are under the protection of the victors, they of the defeated,
If Zeus indeed is stronger than Typhon in battle.
And it ⟨is⟩[76] probable that thus the contending men will do:
To Hyperbius on account of his device
Zeus may be savior, happening to be on his shield.

CHORUS

I trust that the antagonist of Zeus, having
On his shield the unfriendly body of the earthly
Demon—an odious image to mortals and
To the long-lived gods—before
The gates will cast[77] his head.

SCOUT

So may it be! But the fifth again I tell,
Stationed at the fifth Borraean gate,
By the tomb itself of Zeus-born Amphion.
And he swears by the spear, which he holds—trusting

To reverence it more than a god—superior in[78] his eyes,
That he will lay waste the city of the Cadmeans in spite
Of Zeus. This says the fair-browed offspring
Of a mountain-dwelling mother, a man-child man.
And the down lately goes through his cheeks,
His season growing,[79] thick hair rising.
He having a fierce thought that could by no means be attributed
To woman, and a terrible eye, stands against.
Not indeed without boast does he take his stand against the gate:
For the disgrace[80] of the city, on a brazen-nailed
Shield, on the rounded prominence of its body,
A sphinx eating raw flesh with her jaws, fixed on,
He brandished, a bright raised body;
And she bears under her a man, one of the Cadmeans.
As many weapons as possible against this man must be hurled.
For he seems to have come not to make[81] a trade of battle
And not to disgrace the passage of a long way,
Parthenopaeus Arcadian,[82] he such a man
Who resided with us, repaying Argos for his fair nourishment.
He threatens the towers with such things, which may not heaven perform.

ETEOCLES

Aye, may they obtain what they meditate by the gods
With those same unholy boasts!
Aye, may he perish with all ruin and disgrace!
But there is to this one whom you name the Arcadian
A man without boast, and his hand sees what's to be done—
Actor, brother of the before-named,
Who will not permit the tongue without deeds
Rushing within the gate to increase evils,
Nor him to enter into the city bearing the image of that
Most odious ravenous beast upon his hostile shield.
She shall blame him carrying her from without within,
Obtaining frequent blows under the city.
The gods willing I should speak the truth.

CHORUS

Comes the word through my breasts,
And the curles of my hair stand upright
Hearing greatly boasting impious
Men. O that the gods would destroy them on the earth!

SCOUT

Sixth I should mention a man wisest of all
And in strength best, a prophet, force of Amphiareus.
And at the Omolaean gate stationed, [Tydeus,
With evil words he utters many things against the force of
The man-slayer, the disturber of the city,
The greatest teacher of evils to Argos,
Caller of Erinnys, servant of murder,
Council chamber of these evils to Adrastus;
And thy brother, too, worthy of death,[83]
Inspecting his name[84]—the force of Polynices,
And in two at last distributing his name,
He calls. And he says this word with his mouth:
"Surely such a deed is both agreeable[85] to the gods
And fair to hear and tell to those coming after,
The native city and thy country's gods
To destroy,[86] leading against them a foreign host.
But what justice will extinguish the tears of thy mother?
And thy fatherland, by thy zeal by the spear
Taken, how will it be to thee an ally?
I myself indeed shall make fat this ground,
A prophet buried in[87] a hostile[88] soil.

Let us fight! I hope no[89] dishonorable fate."
Such things the prophet, brandishing a well-rounded shield
All of brass, said. But there was no device upon its circle.
For not to seem best but to be he wishes,
Bearing fruit in a deep furrow of[90] the mind,
From which spring glorious counsels.
'Gainst him both wise and good opponents
I exhort to send. Terrible he who reverences the gods.

ETEOCLES

Alas the omen[91] mingling a just man
With the more impious mortals!
In every deed there is than evil fellowship
Nothing worse: fruit is not to be gathered.[92]
(Ate's field bears death for fruit).[93]
Forsooth a pious man, having embarked in a vessel
With sailors desperate on any cunning,[94]
Perishes with the god-abhorred race of men.
He being just with fellow-citizen men,
Inhospitable and forgetful of the gods,
Falling unjustly into the same net,[95]
Struck by the all-common lash of heaven is subdued.
And this one the prophet, I mean the son of Oecleus,
Prudent, just, good, pious[96] man,
Great prophet, mingled with unholy
Bold-mouthed men in spite of sense,
Striving the long pomp again to go,
Zeus willing, shall be drawn down together with them.
I think therefore that he shall not smite the gate,
Not as wanting spirit nor by cowardice of resolution,
But he knows that it is necessary he should die in battle
If there shall be fruit to the prophecies of the Loxian.
But he loves to be silent or to speak what is reasonable.
But, however, against him a man, force of Lasthenes,
An inhospitable doorkeeper I will range.[97]
Old the mind, but a body vigorous[98] he bears,
A foot-swift eye, and he does not slowly move his hand
To grasp from the shield a naked spear.
But it is the gift of heaven for mortals to succeed.

CHORUS

Gods, hearing our just
Prayers, accomplish that the city may be prosperous,
Turning aside from the land evils wrought by the spear against
The invaders. And casting without the towers
May Zeus kill them with his thunderbolt.

SCOUT

The seventh indeed—this one against the seventh gate
I will mention, the brother of thyself,
What fates he imprecates and vows[99] against the city,
Assaulting the towers and menacing the land,
The captive paean vociferating against it,
With thee to encounter, and killing to die near,
Or living the thus dishonorer, banishing man,
To punish[100] with banishment in the same manner.
Such things says, and the native gods
Calls of his fatherland to be wholly observers
Of his prayers, force of Polynices.
And he has a new-put-together and well-made shield
And a double device fixed to it.
For wrought of gold an armed man[101] to see
Some woman leads, modestly leading,
And (she)[102] Justice to be he says, as the letters
Say: "I will restore this man, and he shall have

His native city and the return to his house."[103]
Such of them are the devices.[104]
But do you yourself now know whom you think to send,
As never this man for his heraldings
Will you blame. But know yourself to navigate[105] the city.

ETEOCLES

O god-mad and great hatred of the gods,
O all-wept, my race of Oedipus,
Alas! Surely now the curses of my father are accomplished.[106]
But neither to weep nor to lament is becoming,
Lest then may be produced a more intolerable grief.
And to Polynices surely named after (the fact)[107] I say
Quickly we shall know where the devices end,
If gold-wrought letters shall restore him,
Boiling out upon his shield with rage of mind.
But if the virgin child of Zeus, Dice, were present
To his deeds and mind, perhaps[108] would this be.
But neither him fleeing the darkness of his mother,
Nor in his nursing,[109] nor arriving at the age of puberty ever,
Nor in the gathering of down upon his cheek
Did Dice look upon and think him worthy (her attention).[110]
Nor yet in this ill treatment of his fatherland
Do I think that she now stands by him.
Surely she would be quite[111] falsely named
Dice, associating with a man daring all in his mind.
To these trusting I go and will withstand him
Myself. What other more justly?
To ruler ruler and to brother brother,
Foe with foe I will stand. Bring quick as possible
Greaves, spear, and shield of rocks![112]

CHORUS

Dearest of men, offspring of Oedipus, be
Not in wrath like him speaking the worst things!
But there are enough Cadmean men to go to blows
With the Argives. For their blood be expiated,
But of men of the same blood the death thus self-slaying,
There is not old age of this pollution.

ETEOCLES

If indeed anyone may bear evil without disgrace,
Be it so! For alone is there gain to the dead.
But of evil and base things you will not say there is any glory.

CHORUS

And dost thou remain[113] a child? Let not
Calamity filled with rage spear-mad carry thee! Cast out
Beginning of evil desire!

ETEOCLES

When the deed surely heaven urges on,
Let all the race of Laius, hateful to Phoebus,
Go with a favorable wind obtaining the wave of Cocytus!

CHORUS

Very biting desire excites thee
Bitter-fruited man-slaying to perform
Of unlawful blood.

ETEOCLES

For my dear father's base-performing curse
With dry unwept eyes sits near,
Saying gain before the after fate.

CHORUS

But be thou not incited! Coward thou wilt not
Be called, leading thy life well. Black-rushing Erinnys
Does not enter the houses when from the hands
The gods receive sacrifice.

ETEOCLES By the gods now somehow we have been neglected,
And favor ceases to honor[114] us destroyed.
Why then yet should we cringe to destructive fate?

CHORUS Now it stands near thee, since the demon,[115]
Changed by a timely change of resolution,
Would perhaps come with a more genial
Breath. But now yet it boils.[116]

ETEOCLES Aye, the imprecations of Oedipus boil over,
And very true visions of phantasms in sleep
Distributing my father's possessions.

CHORUS Obey a woman, although not of like breast![117]

ETEOCLES What accomplishment of what (would be said)?[118] Nor is it necessary to be long.

CHORUS That you may not go this way to the seventh gate.

ETEOCLES Me whetted thou wilt not blunt[119] with your words.

CHORUS Victory however, if it is bad, god[120] punishes.

ETEOCLES It does not behoove an armed man to love this word.

CHORUS But dost thou wish to shed the blood of thy brother?

ETEOCLES The gods giving, he would not escape evils.

CHORUS I shudder at the house-destroying
Goddess, not like the gods,
All true, prophetess of ill.
O my father, Erinnys desired
To perform the violent
Curses of Oedipus deranged in mind.
And this child-destroying strife excites her.
But a foreign settler[121] from the mines
Of the Scythians distributes the lots,
A stern distributor
Of possessions, cruel-minded iron,
Dividing[122] by lot ground to inhabit
Whatever they may slain occupy,
Without any share in the great plains.
When suicidally
Slain by each other's hands they may die,
And dust of the earth may drink
Their black-clotted purple[123] blood,
Who would perform[124] purifications?
Who would wash them? O
New afflictions of the houses
Mingled with former ills!
I mean forsooth the ancient
Transgression, bringing swift vengeance.
And it remains to the third age.
When Laius in spite
Of Apollo thrice saying
In Pythian oracles
In the middle of the earth that dying
Without progeny he would save the city,
Overcome by the evil counsels of friends

He begat indeed death to himself:
Father-slaying Oedipus,
Who not[125] in a holy
Field sowing, where he was nourished,
A bloody root
Suffered. Folly brought together
Insane bride and bridegroom.
And a wave of ills like the sea strikes.
One fallen, another rises
Threefold, which round the stern
Of the city roars.
But between[126] a strength for a short time
Extends, a tower in breadth.
But I fear with kings
Lest the city be subdued.
For to be performed are the old-spoken curses,[127]
Severe the changes—
And the ruinous things are not omitted—transpiring.
And wealth[128] grown very fat
Of inventive men
Brings a casting-overboard to the very stern.
For what man so much did the gods
Admire who dwelt with him
In the city, and the life of mortals nourishing many,[129]
As then they honored Oedipus,
Having removed from the region
A man-seizing fate?
And when he became
Sensible of the oracle of wretched
Marriage, at grief of his misfortunes
With maddened heart
He did double evils.
With parricidal hand he wandered
From the eyes of those who had better children.[130]
And to the children of accursed
Cherishing he furious discharged—
Alas! alas!—bitter-tongued curses,
And them with iron-lawed
Hand ever to obtain
Possessions. And now I tremble
Lest the crooked-footed Erinnys perform (them).[131]

SCOUT Be of good courage, children, cherished of your mother!
This city has escaped the yoke of slavery.
The boasts of violent men have fallen,
And the city in fair weather; and in the many blows
Of the billows did not receive (water into the hold).[132]
But the tower protects,[133] and we fortified
The gates with sufficient single fighting champions.[134]
Well are most things in six gates,
But the awful king Apollo has taken
The seventh,[135]
Performing the old ill counsels of Laius.

CHORUS What is the matter new-raging present to the city?

SCOUT (The city has been saved, but the kings of one seed)[136]
Men have died by their own-slaying hands.

CHORUS Who? What did you say? I am beside myself with fear of your [word.

SCOUT Thoughtful now hear: the race of Oedipus

CHORUS O wretched, prophetess am I of evils!

SCOUT —Nor doubtfully indeed—(that)[137] they have been cut down.

CHORUS Did they come to that? Indeed it is heavy, but tell!

SCOUT Thus by fraternal hands they were destroyed with violence.

CHORUS Thus the Demon[138] was common to both together.

SCOUT The same surely may destroy the ill-starved race.
Such things to rejoice and to bemoan it is allowed.
The city on the one hand doing well, but the rulers,
Both[139] commanders, have divided[140] by lot, by the hammer-wrought
Scythian iron, the whole abundance of their possessions.
And they will have of land what they may take in burial
According to the unhappy prayers of their father taken away.
The city has been saved, and earth has drank the blood
Of kings of the same seed by one another's murder.[141]

CHORUS O great Zeus and city-holding
Gods, who indeed these towers
Of Cadmus defend,
Whether shall I rejoice and cry aloud
To the unhurt[142] savior of the city,
Or weep the miserable and unfortunate
Childless polemarchs?
Who surely rightly according to the name,
And much striving,
Were destroyed by impious thought.
O black and perfect
Curse of the race of Oedipus,
Some evil chill falls around my heart.
I composed a song for the tomb
As Priestess of Bacchus, blood-dropping
Dead weeping, unfortunate
Having died. Surely ill-omened this
Concert of the spear.
The desired saying of the father
Accomplished, nor refused,
And the incredible counsels of Laius prevailed,
And miseries about the city,
And omens of the gods are not blunted.
O causing many groans you have done
This incredible thing. And came
The bewailed sufferings not in word:
These of themselves plain, before our eyes the messenger's word.
Double sorrows, evils of two
Men slain by themselves, double
Perfect these sufferings. What may I say?
Some other labor surely may labor[143]
Sitting on the hearths of the houses.
But, friends, with a fair wind of lamentations
Row around the head a conveying motion
Of the hands, which ever conveys through[144] Acheron
The groanless black-sailed
Navigated bark
To the untracked by Apollo, the sunless
All-receiving invisible waste.
But these come to a sad affair,
Antigone and Ismene,
The mourning of their brothers. Not dubiously

I think that they from their loving deep-bosomed
Breasts will send forth worthy grief.
But it is just that we howl, before
Relating, the sad-sounding hymn of
Erinnys, and to Hades
Chant the hostile paean.

SEMICHORUS O[145] most ill-brothered of all, as many as
Clasp a twisted girdle round their clothing,
I weep, I groan, and no deception
That I do not in my mind rightly delight with sounds of joy.

SEMICHORUS Oh, oh, unfortunate,
Not trusting your friends, and unexhausted of evils,
Your father's house taking,
Unfortunate, with force!

SEMICHORUS Unfortunate surely, who unfortunate deaths
Found in the ruin of your house!

SEMICHORUS Oh, oh, destroying the walls
Of houses and the odious monarchies
Looking after, now ye have obtained
The lot of the sword.
(Not by friendship
But by murder ye determined).[146]
And surely the awful Erinnys of father
Oedipus has performed true things
As was foretold.

SEMICHORUS Auspiciously[147] struck!

SEMICHORUS Struck indeed, of
Kindred sides!

SEMICHORUS Alas, alas, unhappy!
Alas, alas, curses
Of death to be atoned for by deaths!

SEMICHORUS You tell a piercing wound.[147a]

SEMICHORUS In houses and in bodies
Struck I recount.[148]

SEMICHORUS It remains to chide the untold
And accursed double
Fate from the father.[149]

SEMICHORUS And a groan has gone through
The city, the towers groan,
Groans the man-loving plain.
And possessions remain for the descendants
On account of which to them, unfortunate,
On account of which strife arose
And the end of death.
And they irascible obtained
Possessions such as is just they should obtain.
Reconciler not without blame to friends,
Nor is Ares agreeable.

SEMICHORUS Struck with steel thus they fare.

SEMICHORUS And struck with steel await them—

Perhaps someone may say—who?
The lots[150] of their paternal graves.

SEMICHORUS

Surely an echo of the houses against them
Sends forth piercing lamentation,
Groaning for itself, suffering for itself,
Hostile, not fond of mirth, truly
Pouring out from the heart which,
I weeping, diminishes
For these two beings.
And it is permitted to say to the
Wretched that they did
Many things indeed to the citizens
And the destructive ranks
Of all foreigners in war.

SEMICHORUS

Unhappy she who bore them
Of all women, as many as
Have been called Child-bearing!
Making the child of herself husband to herself
She bore these who thus have died by
One another's murderous kindred hands.

ISMENE

Of one seed surely and wholly ruined,
Not by friendly divisions,
By mad strife
. . . . . .[151]
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . .

SEMICHORUS

Stern deliverer from contention, the marine
Foreigner, from fire shaken,
Whetted iron, severe
And evil distributer of property, Mars, making
True the curse of the father!

ANTIGONE

They have their lot, having obtained, o unfortunate,
Zeus-given misfortunes!
And under the body of the earth
A very deep wealth shall be.

ISMENE

O houses blooming[152]
With many afflictions!
And finally these curses
Have screeched the stern law,
The race being turned
In all-turning flight.
And the Demon has placed
A trophy of Ate
In the gates in which they died,
And conquering the two, has ceased.

ANTIGONE

Struck, thou struck'st!

ISMENE

And thou died'st killing!

ANTIGONE

With the spear thou didst kill!

ISMENE

And with the spear thou didst die!

ANTIGONE

Unfortunate laborer!

ISMENE — Unfortunate sufferer!

ANTIGONE — Flow tears!

ISMENE — Flow lamentations!

ANTIGONE — 964/965 He that slew shall be abandoned.[153]

966/967/968 Alas, alas, my mind is mad with lamentations!

ISMENE — And within my heart groans!

ANTIGONE — Alas, alas, much-wept thou!

ISMENE — 970 And thou, too, also all-wretched!

ANTIGONE — By a friend thou wast destroyed!

ISMENE — And a friend thou slewest!

ANTIGONE — Double to tell

ISMENE — And double to see!

ANTIGONE — Such griefs are these things near!

ISMENE — Near these sisters to their brothers!

CHORUS — O Fate afflicting, unfortunate,
And awful shade of Oedipus,
Black Erinnys, surely of great strength someone thou art!

ISMENE — 980 Alas, alas, hurts not to be witnessed
He showed from flight to me!

ANTIGONE — Nor did he come when he had slain!

ISMENE — For being saved he lost his breath!

ANTIGONE — He lost it surely!

ISMENE — And that of this one took away!

ANTIGONE — Wretched race!

ISMENE — Wreched too they suffered
Grievous woes of the same name!

ANTIGONE — 990 Thrice wet with triple woes!

ISMENE — Sad to tell!

ANTIGONE — And sad to see!
O Fate afflicting, intolerable,
And awful shade of Oedipus,
Black Erinnys, surely of great strength someone thou art!
Thou then knowest entirely!

ISMENE — And thou nothing afterwards learning!

ANTIGONE — When you came to the city

ISMENE Antagonist with spear to him!

ANTIGONE Sad to tell!

ISMENE And sad to see!

ANTIGONE 1000 Oh affliction!

ISMENE 1001 } Oh, oh, evils to the houses
1002 }
1003 And the land, and before all to me!

ANTIGONE Alas, alas, and besides indeed to me!

ISMENE Alas, alas, of grievous ills
King Eteocles author!

ANTIGONE Oh most lamentable of all!

ISMENE Oh furious in woe!

ANTIGONE Oh, oh, where shall we bury these in the land?
Oh, where (it is)[154] most honorable!

ISMENE 1010 Oh, oh, the misery lying by the father!

HERALD What seems good and has seemed good to the counsellors of the [people,
It behooves me to announce, of this Cadmean city.
This Eteocles for his good will to the land
To bury has seemed good, with friendly grave[155] of earth.
For keeping off the enemy he received death in the city.
And holy with respect to his country's rights, being without blame,
He died when it is beautiful for the young to die.
So indeed about this one it has been ordered to say.
But this one's brother, this corse of Polynices,
1020 To cast out unburied, a prey to dogs,
As being a destroyer of the Cadmean land
Unless some one of the gods had stood in the way of
His spear. But a chief[156] even dead he shall obtain
His country's gods, whom he dishonoring,
A foreign army leading, was taking the city.
So by winged birds it seems good that this one
Disgracefully buried receive this reward.
And neither burial rights accompany,
Nor show respect by shrill-sounding lamentations,
1030 And to be without the honor of burial by friends:
Such seems good to this authority of the Cadmeans.

ANTIGONE But I say to the rulers of the Cadmeans
If not any other wishes to bury him with me
I will bury him and renounce danger
Burying my brother! Nor am I ashamed
Having this disobedient[157] anarchy to the city.
Terrible the common womb from which we were born
Of a wretched mother and from an unfortunate father!
Therefore my soul willing shares the ill he suffered
1040 Unwilling, alive him dead with kindred mind.
And his flesh hollow-bellied wolves
Shall not devour. Let it not seem good to any!
For sepulchre myself and burial I,
Though I am a woman, for him I will contrive,
Bearing in the bosom of my linen robe.

And myself will bury, nor to any let it seem good again otherwise!
To courage efficient invention is present.

HERALD I tell thee not to do violence to the city in this!

ANTIGONE I tell thee not to proclaim superfluous things to me!

HERALD Stern, however, a people having escaped ills!

ANTIGONE Make them stern! Unburied this one shall not be!

HERALD But whom the city hates wilt thou honor with burial?

ANTIGONE Already the affairs of this one have not been celebrated with honor to the gods.

HERALD Not indeed before this region he invaded with danger.

ANTIGONE Suffering ill, with evils he repaid.

HERALD But against all instead of one this work was!

ANTIGONE Eris accomplishes her word, lowest of gods.
And I will bury him! Do not long-harangue!

HERALD Then self-willed be! But I declare[158] it!

SEMICHORUS Alas, alas, o great-boasting and race-destroying
Fates Erinnyes, who the race
Of Oedipus thus utterly have destroyed!

ANTIGONE What may I suffer? and what may I do? and what shall I resolve?
How shall I endure not to weep thee
Nor accompany to the tomb?
But I fear, and I am turned aside
By fear of the citizens.

SEMICHORUS Thou indeed wilt obtain many mourners.
But he the wretched, unmourned,
Having one-wept lamentation of a sister
Goes. Who would these obey?

SEMICHORUS Let the city do, and let it not do,
To those who weep Polynices!
We indeed go and will bury with thou
Accompanying. For by birth
Common this grief. And the city
At other times in other cases praises justices.

SEMICHORUS But we with this one, as the city
And justice approves.
For after the blessed and the force of Zeus,
This one defended the city of the Cadmeans—
Not to be destroyed, nor by a wave
Of foreign men
Inundated for the most part.

THE END

NOTES

8 The following abbreviations have been employed in succeeding footnotes:
suprascr.: Thoreau's first choice of word.
suprascr.: An alternate reading, written above the first choice.
infrascr.: An alternate reading, written below the first choice.
incert.: A reading not wholly legible.
cancell.: A crossed-out reading.
intercl.: A reading enclosed in parentheses.
incorr.: A reading before being altered.
addit.: A word added by the present editor.

9 Thoreau queries "messenger."
10 whate'er] that which suprascr.
11 managing suprascr.; holding script., intercl.
12 Parentheses by Thoreau.
13 thanked suprascr.; cause of script., intercl.
14 blamed suprascr.; sounded script., cancell.
15 called] so called infrascr.
16 Indeed defend suprascr.; Indeed be a defender script., cancell.
17 exceeds] exceedeth it incorr.
18 Adding much vigorous strength of body] Increasing much the vigor (firmness) of his body suprascr.
19 of whatever age suprascr.; having whatever season script., intercl.
20 aid suprascr.; help script., cancell.
21 ne'er suprascr.; never script., cancell.
22 your suprascr.; his script., cancell.
23 This one suprascr.; He script.
24 Parentheses by Thoreau.
25 intends suprascr.; design suprascr.; plots script., cancell.
26 ramparts infrascr.; battlements script., cancell.
27 who, I trust, will not loiter by the way incorr.
28 spy] observer suprascr.
29 place] arrange suprascr.
30 completely armed, the host] the well-armed host suprascr., cancell.
31 "Savage" is a mistranslation of the Greek word chersaion: "of dry land."
32 speak] express suprascr.
33 Thoreau renders by "resounds" the Greek noun boai, "battle-cry."
34 divinities suprascr.; gods script., cancell.
35 noise] clash suprascr.
36 "Head" is a mistranslation of the Greek word kratos: "power."
37 Pallas suprascr.; Minerva script., cancell.
38 sigh suprascr.; cry script., cancell.
39 insolence suprascr.; courage script.
40 ruined] worsted suprascr.
41 thou suprascr.; you script., cancell.
42 against] with suprascr.
43 calm] composed suprascr.
44 greatly] parentheses by Thoreau; excessively intercl.
45 thing suprascr.; end script.

46 sends] emits suprascr.
47 Thoreau's Greek text did not accept any emendation of the Ms. reading at this point.
48 is distinguished] excels suprascr.
49 before them suprascr. against him script., cancell.
50 Thoreau's Greek text here accepted Dindorf's emendation.
51 come] fall suprascr.
52 dead] dying infrascr.
53 fulfill] perform suprascr.
54 emblem] device suprascr.
55 prepared] provided suprascr.; furnished infrascr.
56 vengeance] justice suprascr.
57 with] and by suprascr.
58 colts' seats] virgin apartments suprascr.
59 Parentheses by Thoreau.
60 advance] strike suprascr.
61 head-gear] bridles suprascr.
62 storming] raging against suprascr.
63 nostril-boasting] snorting suprascr.
64 devised] fashioned suprascr.
65 This] Such an suprascr.
66 furious] greedy suprascr.
67 ornament] deck suprascr.
68 Parentheses by Thoreau.
69 varying] whirling suprascr.
70 be addit.
71 serpent] dragon suprascr.
72 son] offspring suprascr.
73 trial] need suprascr.
74 fortune] combat infrascr.; practice infrascr.
75 rightly] fitly suprascr.
76 is addit.
77 cast] lay suprascr.
78 superior in] above suprascr.
79 growing] producing it suprascr.
80 disgrace] reproach suprascr.
81 make] retail suprascr.; delay infrascr., incert.
82 Arcadian] of Arcadia suprascr.
83 worthy of death suprascr.; leagued with him script. Thoreau's Greek text here did not accept emendation.
84 Inspecting his name infrascr.; Blaming by name script. Thoreau's Greek text here did not accept emendation.
85 agreeable suprascr.; friendly script., cancell.
86 destroy] lay waste suprascr.
87 in] under suprascr.
88 hostile suprascr.; foreign script., cancell.
89 no] not superscr.
90 of] in suprascr.
91 omen suprascr.; bird script.
92 gathered] derived infrascr.
93 Parentheses by Thoreau.
94 cunning] craft suprascr.
95 net] catching suprascr.; snare infrascr.

98 pious] reverent suprascr.
97 range] station suprascr.; oppose infrascr.
98 vigorous] blooming suprascr.
99 vows] prays suprascr.
100 punish] requite suprascr.
101 armed man] soldier suprascr.
102 Parentheses by Thoreau.
103 house] home suprascr.
104 devices] inventions infrascr.
105 navigate] steer suprascr.
106 accomplished] brought to an end suprascr.
107 Parentheses by Thoreau.
108 perhaps suprascr.; quickly script.
109 nursing] education suprascr.
110 Parentheses by Thoreau.
111 quite suprascr.; all justly script., intercl.
112 rocks] stones suprascr.
113 Either Thoreau's Greek text showed a reading which would justify "remain," or he mistook the verb form.
114 honor] respect suprascr. The Greek text does not justify Thoreau's rendering "ceases" in this line.
115 demon] divinity suprascr.
116 boils] rages infrascr.
117 Thoreau's Greek text may have read sternôn ("breast") instead of the accepted stergôn ("liking").
118 Parentheses by Thoreau.
119 blunt] take off the edge suprascr.
120 god] heaven suprascr.
121 settler] colonist infrascr.
122 Dividing] Shaking asunder suprascr.
123 purple] bloody suprascr.
124 perform] extend suprascr.
125 Thoreau's Greek text apparently read hoste mê pros hagnan with various MSS.
126 between suprascr.; in the meanwhile script., intercl.
127 Thoreau's Greek text presumably read teleiai...arai with the MSS.
128 wealth suprascr.; happiness script.
129 Thoreau's Greek text did not accept emendation at this point.
130 Thoreau's Greek text probably read ap' ommatôn with most MSS.
131 Parentheses by Thoreau.
132 Parentheses by Thoreau.
133 protects suprascr.; covers script.

134 champions suprascr.; opponents script.
135 seventh] chiefs 7's leaders infrascr.
136 Parentheses by Thoreau.
137 Parentheses by Thoreau.
138 Demon] Fate infrascr.
139 Both] 2 suprascr.
140 divided suprascr.; obtained script.; shared infrascr.
141 murder suprascr.; hands script., cancell.
142 unhurt suprascr.; uninjuring script.
143 "May labor" apparently is a mistranslation of the noun ponoi.
144 conveys through suprascr.; goes to script., cancell.
145 From lines 871 to 957 Thoreau preserves an assignment of rôles different from that of modern editors.
146 Parentheses by Thoreau.
147 Auspiciously] by well-named infrascr.
147a Thoreau's Greek text did not accept emendation at this point.
148 recount] reproach suprascr. Thoreau's Greek text did not accept emendation at this point.
149 It is hard to say what Thoreau's Greek text may have been for these three lines, but he mistakenly renders menei by "remain" instead of "wrath."
150 lots] fates intercl.
151 Lines 936-939 have not been translated by Thoreau. They may be rendered thus:

> At their quarrel's end.
> Hate has ceased. Mingled on the gory
> Ground is their life-stream,
> And their blood is one indeed.

152 Thoreau's Greek text read domoi instead of genean.
153 abandoned] exposed suprascr.
154 Parentheses by Thoreau.
155 grave] burial suprascr.; digging down infrascr.
156 Thoreau's Greek text may have read agós ("chief") instead of ágos ("pollution").
157 disobedient suprascr.; incredible script.
158 "Declare" is inaccurate; rather, "forbid."